

WASHINGTON, DC -- U.S. Rep. Charlie Melancon today announced that the Greater Lafourche Port Commission will receive a \$1.25 million grant from the Federal Aviation Administration for improvements to the South Lafourche Leonard J. Miller, Jr., Airport in Galliano, Louisiana. The Iberia Parish Airport Authority was also awarded a \$265,000 grant for improvements to the Acadiana Regional Airport in New Iberia, Louisiana. May 14, 2007
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"The South Lafourche and Acadiana Airports play vital roles in supporting businesses in south Louisiana," said Melancon. **"Today's federal grants will enable them to make upgrades that will improve safety and help grow our economy. I will continue working to improve our infrastructure so we can attract more businesses and good jobs to south Louisiana."**

The grant to the Greater Lafourche Port Commission will fund the third phase of a multi-stage project to improve the airport's runway to bring it up to current FAA standards and so that it can accommodate larger aircraft. The airport is a major support facility for nearby Port Fourchon, which has dramatically expanded in recent years to serve the booming energy industry on the Gulf Coast.

In phase I, which has already been completed, the runway was extended by 1200 feet and widened by 25 feet. Phase II, which was completed last year, involved installing lighting on the extension. The grant announced today will fund the next phase: strengthening the runway and aircraft parking apron to accommodate wheel loads up to 70,000 pounds. The Port Commission is currently in the planning and design stages for the construction of an Instrument Landing System (ILS), Approach Lighting System, Safety Area Improvements, and full parallel taxiway. These projects are scheduled to be complete by 2008.

The expansion project was initiated by the Greater Lafourche Port Commission after companies in the region identified the need for adequate air services in close proximity to Fourchon and Galliano in order to transport specialized equipment in "just-in-time" fashion. Enhancing the runway will also help the public in the event of a natural disaster or national crisis.

The \$265,000 grant to the Iberia Parish Airport Authority will be used to install perimeter fencing at the Acadiana Regional Airport in order to enhance airport security and to prevent intrusion of wildlife onto the airport's aircraft movement areas.

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